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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Swaziland: revised draft resolution

Importance of the role of parents in the care, development and well-being of children

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[2] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[3]

Also recalling all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child, the most recent of which is resolution 57/190 of 18 December 2002, and taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/86 of 25 April 2003,[4]

Acknowledging the role of parents in the family and the shared responsibilities of parents in the upbringing of children,

Convinced that equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family between men and women and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy,

Recognizing the need for policies that support and reinforce conditions that facilitate the effective exercise of the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents, legal guardians and other caregivers, in a manner consistent with the evolving

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[3] Resolution 44/25, annex.
[4] E/2003/23 (Part I), chap. II, sect. A.

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capacities of the child, and provide appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of his or her rights,

Recognizing also that a considerable number of children live without parental support, including children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, children working and/or living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children and children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation,

Further recognizing that hundreds of millions of children suffer from war, violence, exploitation, neglect and all forms of abuse and discrimination and that around the world children live under especially difficult circumstances,

Reaffirming the need to ensure that all social and economic development policies are fully responsive to the diverse and changing needs of families and their individual members and to provide necessary support to the most vulnerable families and most vulnerable family members,

Noting that the family-related provisions of the outcomes of the United Nations summits and conferences of the 1990s and their follow-up processes continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Aware that the well-being of children is of vital importance to all peoples of all nations,

1. *Recognizes* the unique duty and ability of parents to guide children properly, raise them in a healthy environment and impart to them a sense of duty, integrity, responsibility, civic-mindedness, compassion and service towards others in order to help strengthen families, communities and nations of the world;

2. *Reaffirms* that parents have the right to choose the kind of education given to their children;

3. *Encourages* parents and legal guardians to ensure, to the best of their ability, that the education of the child be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, languages and values, the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for a responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality between the sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment;

4. *Reaffirms* its respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions;

5. *Acknowledges* the duty of States to refrain from any discrimination between parents on the basis of gender, nationality or any other grounds;

6. *Urges* all Governments to render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and to ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children;

7. *Reaffirms* that maternity, motherhood, parenting and the role of women in procreation must not be a basis for discrimination nor should it restrict the full participation of women in society, and recognizes the important role often played by women in many countries in caring for other members of their family;

8. *Also reaffirms* that States should take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible and the obligation of States to encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life;

9. *Urges* States to:

(a) Use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child, that they, or the legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child and that the best interests of the child shall be their basic concern;

(b) Respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except in cases where it is contrary to the child's best interest;

(c) Ensure that the child shall not be involuntarily separated from his or her parents, except in cases where competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable laws and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child, and that in any such proceedings, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known;

10. *Calls upon* States to take special measures to support children living without parental support, including orphans, children working and/or living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation and children who are incarcerated, as well as the institutions, facilities and services that care for them;

11. *Also calls upon* States to assist single-parent families and to pay special attention to the needs of widows and orphans in order to assist the building of family-like ties, particularly in difficult circumstances;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to incorporate parent-related activities into the United Nations celebration of the International Day of Families on 15 May;

13. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, while elaborating his report on "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family", at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, to devote attention to the implementation of the present resolution.